

Forum: The First General Assembly

Issue: Calibrating Openness Regarding Global Munition Proceedings

Student officers: Arwa Hassan and Farah Ashraf

Position: Chairs

Introduction

About Munition

The term "munitions" refers to all products and components related to ammunition that are manufactured for or utilized by the armed forces to ensure national defense and security. This encompasses ammunition and its components controlled by entities such as the Department of Defense, the Coast Guard, the Department of Energy, and the National Guard. Included within this definition are confined gaseous, liquid, and solid propellants, as well as explosives, pyrotechnics, chemical and riot control agents, smokes, incendiaries, bulk explosives, and chemical warfare agents. The term also covers chemical munitions, rockets, guided and ballistic missiles, bombs, warheads, mortar rounds, artillery ammunition, small arms ammunition, grenades, mines, torpedoes, depth charges, cluster munitions and dispensers, and demolition charges, along with devices and components associated with any mentioned items. Excluded from this definition are wholly inert items, improvised explosive devices, nuclear weapons, nuclear devices, and nuclear components—except for nonnuclear components of nuclear devices managed under the Department of Energy's nuclear weapons program, following completion of all necessary sanitation operations under the Atomic Energy Act of 1954.

Openness Regarding Global Munition

Openness regarding global munition is the commitment to transparency and disclosure concerning the worldwide production, trade, and utilization of military munitions. This entails providing accessible and comprehensive information about the various types of ammunition products and their components, detailing the manufacturers involved, distribution channels, and the purposes for which armed forces use them in the context of national defense and security. Embracing an open approach extends to sharing data on international collaborations, agreements, and treaties that regulate and manage military munitions. Additionally, transparency involves disclosing information about the environmental and humanitarian impacts associated with munition use, along with efforts to address and minimize any adverse consequences. Openness aims to promote international cooperation, build trust, and foster accountability among nations, ensuring the responsible and ethical deployment of military munitions for the collective goal of global security and stability. Nations have the option to inform the United Nations about their imports and exports of arms. Voluntary reporting on the transfer of weapons indicates a sense of domestic confidence, reflecting the authorities' mature willingness to subject key national defense policies to scrutiny by the media, academia, and other entities. Additionally, the act of sharing such information can foster trust between countries and play a role in early warning systems and preventive diplomacy efforts. Transparent disclosure regarding armaments may also serve as an incentive for exercising restraint in the production or transfer of weaponry.

The Current Legalities in Place

The current legal framework regarding the calibration of openness concerning global munitions involves several international agreements and conventions. Nations participate in the

United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA), providing voluntary information on arms imports and exports to build confidence and prevent destabilizing accumulations. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), in force since 2014, mandates reporting on arms transfers to enhance transparency and accountability in the international arms trade. The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) also facilitates transparency and confidence-building measures among member states. Additionally, national legislation varies in its regulation of arms export and import, with some countries having stricter reporting requirements. United Nations Security Council resolutions may impose arms embargoes in specific situations, and compliance is legally binding on member states.

Definition of Key Terms

Munition international law:

United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA) This voluntary reporting mechanism allows member states to provide information on their imports and exports of conventional arms, including munitions. UNROCA aims to promote transparency and build confidence among nations.

International Law:

International law is a collection of rules and concepts established by the United Nations that includes conventions, treaties, and standards. It is the governing framework for international relations, with a primary emphasis on supporting global economic and social growth and strengthening international peace and security.

Munition:

"Munitions are military products and components used for national defense, including ammunition, explosives, chemical agents, and various devices, managed by entities like the Department of Defense. Exclusions are inert items, improvised explosive devices, and nuclear weapons/components, except nonnuclear components managed under the Department of Energy's program post-sanitation operations per the Atomic Energy Act of 1954."

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE):

The OSCE is actively involved in the Trilateral Contact Group (TCG), a forum comprising the OSCE, Russia, and Ukraine. This group serves as the primary platform for addressing and overseeing the implementation of different elements outlined in the Minsk agreements.

Key Issues

Impact of Munitions on Citizens:

The impact of munitions on civilians is multifaceted, encompassing profound humanitarian, social, and economic consequences, particularly in regions marked by conflict. These weapons, ranging from explosives to artillery shells, often lead to direct harm, causing injuries and loss of life among civilians, with the indiscriminate nature of certain munitions exacerbating risks for women and children. The devastation extends beyond casualties to displacement, as communities are forced to flee, resulting in humanitarian crises marked by challenges in accessing basic necessities. Infrastructure, including homes, schools, and hospitals,

suffers significant damage, disrupting normal life and necessitating extensive post-conflict reconstruction efforts. The psychological toll is substantial, with the constant threat of munitions contributing to anxiety, stress, and trauma, especially among vulnerable populations like children. Economic stability is undermined through the destruction of businesses, agriculture, and essential services, leading to long-lasting economic challenges. Additionally, the use of munitions contributes to broader humanitarian crises, limiting access to healthcare, clean water, and sanitation. Efforts to address the impact involve upholding humanitarian laws, promoting conflict resolution, and supporting post-conflict reconstruction initiatives to mitigate the enduring effects on affected populations. Initiatives such as clearing unexploded ordnance, providing psychological support, and rebuilding infrastructure are essential components of a comprehensive response to the consequences of munitions on civilians. Unsecured or poorly managed ammunition stockpiles fuel insecurity. Massive diversion of ammunition to illicit markets has been a catalyst for armed conflict, organized crime and terrorism. Moreover, diverted ammunition is increasingly used to assemble improvised explosive devices. Moreover, in the last fifty years, poorly handled ammunition has caused unintended explosions at munitions sites in over 100 countries, leading to significant humanitarian and socio-economic crises. The distinctive difficulties associated with conventional ammunition stem from their explosive characteristics and inclination toward instability. The inherent chemistry of ammunition demands strict storage protocols to avert explosions that can result in severe humanitarian repercussions, encompassing fatalities, injuries, displacement, and environmental harm.

Major Parties and Their Views

The United States of America:

The United States of America has backed programs including the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Arms Trade Treaty, and export control agreements like the Wassenaar Arrangement. It has placed a strong emphasis on upholding its own national security interests, preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction, and transferring weapons responsibly. It has also shown commitment to pursuing arms control measures that seek to limit the spread of nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons.

Russia:

Russia has participated in arms control agreements like the Chemical Weapons Convention and the New START Treaty (Strategic weapons Reduction Treaty). Russia frequently highlights the importance of preserving strategic stability, multilateralism, and equal security considerations. It sees arms control agreements as crucial instruments to prevent arms races, lessen the possibility of escalating conflicts, and guarantee stability in international relations.

United Kingdom:

The United Kingdom has been actively engaged in global munition proceedings. It supports initiatives such as the Arms Trade Treaty, the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions, and export control regimes. The UK emphasizes responsible arms transfers, non-proliferation, and the promotion of human rights and humanitarian concerns.

Timeline

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>
1968	Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)
1972	The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)
1991	United Nations Register of Conventional Arms (UNROCA)
1992	Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)
1996	Wassenaar Arrangement
1997	Mine Ban Treaty (also known as the Ottawa Treaty)
2008	Convention On Cluster Munitions (Ccm)
2013	Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

Previous Attempts to Resolve the Issue

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) is a global agreement designed to oversee and control the international trade of conventional arms. Its primary objective is to prevent and eliminate the unauthorized trade and diversion of such arms by establishing international standards that govern transfers.

Wassenaar Arrangement

The Wassenaar Arrangement is a multilateral export control regime focused on conventional arms and dual-use goods and technologies which aims to promote transparency and responsibility in the transfer of these items.

Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM)

The CCM is an international treaty that bans the use, stockpiling, production, and transfer of cluster munitions. It also mandates provisions for victim assistance and the clearance of contaminated areas.

Mine Ban Treaty (or the Ottawa Treaty)

The Mine Ban Treaty is an international agreement that prohibits the use, production, stockpiling, and transfer of anti-personnel landmines. It focuses on preventing harm to civilians and facilitating mine clearance.

Possible Solutions

Due to the aforementioned detrimental effects of munition, it is imperative that solutions are established to ensure the minimum damage. The proposed solutions must be peaceful and diplomatic, to ensure cooperation between the countries. The following solutions are suggested: Strengthening and ensuring all countries abide by the aforementioned international agreements, Promoting dialogue and transparency between countries (in regards to the authorized exports, best practices etc.) to promote cooperation and enhance natural security, addressing preventing, cleaning up unethical practices (such as cluster munitions and weapons of mass destruction) ,and providing victim assistance programs and efficient healthcare

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